

SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION: A CASE STUDY OF BABY-BOOMERS, GENERATION X, AND GENERATION Y IN BANGKOK, THAILAND.

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Abstract: This study assessed 2 main concepts, firstly, it investigated about the relationship between social media addiction and 7 gratifications-obtained that can be obtained from social media usage (Peer attention, Social exchange, Friendship maintenance, Information seeking, Identity creation & management, Free expression, Escape). Secondly, the influence of generations (Baby-Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y) toward Social Media Addiction and 7 gratifications-obtained had been explored in this study. A total 210 questionnaires were composed to evaluate. Pearson's correlation was used for responding to first concept of this research, whereas ANOVA used for investigating a second concept. The results of data analysis showed that all of 7 gratifications-obtained except Information seeking were positively related to social media addiction. Moreover, this research found that there was an influence of generation toward 5 gratifications-obtained (except Peer attention, Social exchange) and social media addiction. Principally, these findings were the important evidences that prove the existing of those relationships and the stimulus of generation toward social media usage behaviour.

Keywords: Social media addiction, Gratifications-obtained, Generation, uses and gratifications

Introduction: HowTo.gov (2011) suggested that social media can do creating, combining, editing, organizing, sharing and commenting on content online. It allows people to express their own idea and communicate between each other as a two-ways communication.

The study of Valente (2010) confirmed that social media provide people tools, which are used for communicate in their interpersonal conversation within networks. Thus, social media give the way of people live, the power to speak and the power to organize in the Internet world (Ali, 2011).

However, there are some obstacles existing along with the benefit of social network, as in 2008 Mark Bauerlein and his book "The Dumbest Generation" mentioned. He was underlying that spending too much time of "MySpace generation", which mean the current generation, on social media such as, instant massaging (IM) and social network sites (SNS) has been made this generation become the dumbest generation ever, since they do not try to develop their knowledge, reading ability, capacity to compete internationally and even their social responsibilities (Bauerlein, 2008).

Therefore according to those features of social media in term of interpersonal communication, leisure and entertainment and socializing,

probably lead to social media addiction. Consequently, in the perspectives of uses and gratification, this research was conducted to evaluate why users in Bangkok, Thailand use and addicted to social media, moreover as the generational characteristic, comparative between 3 different generations about (1) social media addiction, and (2) 7 gratifications-obtained were studied in this research accordingly due to the fact that generational companion within populations generally share their experiences and perspectives (Mannheim, 1952; Simirenko, 1966) base on their jointly life stage (Sessa et al., 2007). Moreover, as a generation, it develops characteristics that distinguish from prior generations such as, personality traits, attitudes, motivations and work values (Smola et al., 2002).

Literature review: What are social media?

Social media has been existed since 1981 and has been extensively raised after 2003 (Boyd and Ellison, 2008). It contain user-generated services such as, social network sites (SNS), instant massaging (IM), blogs, online/review rating sites, video sharing sites, online communities and even virtual game worlds, by which users design, create, edit and publish content themselves (Krishnamurthy and Dou, 2008). Consumer activities on social media widely have been classified as 2 types, which are contribution

(posting) and consumption (observing) activities (Shao, 2009; Schlosser, 2005). Interestingly, in the past research showed that Generation-Y actively contributes the online content within social media world and they have been significantly appealed into social media world, where they can take some part (Dye, 2007).

Social Media Addiction and Internet Addiction Disorder

Basically, Huang (2011) has developed the concept of social media addiction for investigating adolescents in China. In detail, the antecedents of social media addiction concept was adapted and adopted from Internet Addiction Disorder (IAD), which is the first disorders that related to Internet and has descended from basis essence of *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder* (4th Ed.) (DSM-IV) that proposed by American Psychiatric Association in 1994. IAD can be defined as behavioural addiction, which contains 6 elements of traditional addiction, such as saliency, toleration, withdrawal, mood alteration, confliction and deterioration (Griffiths, 1996), principally social media addiction can be categorized as one of the Addiction Disorder as well. Huang (2011) studied about overall image of social media addiction among adolescents in China and found 4 symptoms, which relevant as IM addiction, as by following:

- Preoccupation; showing an annoyed behaviours when be teased during online
- Adverse Consequences; cannot control time that has been used for online; constantly spend time more than be purposed; ignore the other duties; be criticized by companion according to online
- Alleviation of Negative emotions; use social media as a tool to alternate mood or getaway from responsibilities
- Loss of Interest in Social activities; choosing to spend time on social media rather than go out with companion; failing in decreasing a social media online time; companionship or other opportunities are endangered due to online

-U&G theory in term of 7 gratifications-obtained
Three perspectives of gratification from U&G theory, which are (1) social gratifications, (2) information seeking gratifications, and (3) entertainment gratifications had been carried along with 7 gratifications-obtained that be mentioned in this research, in additional Huang (2011) described 7 gratifications-obtained that can be obtained from social media as by following:

- Peer attention represents that users could draw an attention from social media activities, for instance if users upload message or photo upon social media, they will get some attention from their peer
- Social exchange represents the exchange of collectivism by means of social media usage
- Friendship maintenance denotes that users use social media as a tool for maintain their relationship among companion
- Information seeking represents that users use social media for seek some information, to know what is their companion pay attentiveness
- Identity creation & management represents that users use social media to hiding their online identity and be someone else
- Free expression characterizes that users use social media to express their thoughts spontaneously, this area include behaviour that use social media to communicate with others in non-comfortable to talk face-to-face topics
- Escape represents that users use social media to escape from things, which they should do but do not want to do, or they use social media to turn their negative emotions to be better, or even use it for forgetting their own troubles in daily life

Conceptual framework: The conceptual framework of this study was adapted and adopted from the previous studies, which are Huang (2011), Whiting and Williams (2013), Bolton et al. (2013).

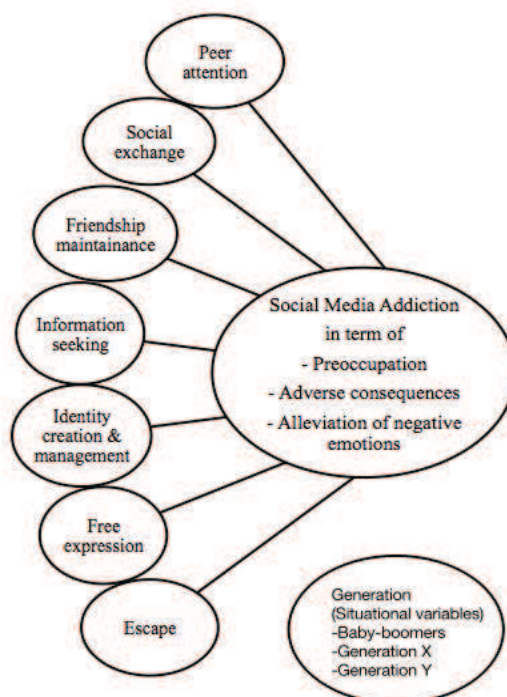


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework that had been developed from previous studies

Firstly, this study was conducted to consider the relationship between independent variables, which are (1) Peer attention, (2) Social exchange, (3) Friendship maintenance, (4) Information seeking, (5) Identity creation & management, (6) Free expression, (7) Escape and dependent variable, which is social media addiction. Consequently, researcher proposed null hypothesizes in this part as by following:

- H₀₁:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of peer attention is not correlated with social media addiction*
- H₀₂:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of social exchange is not correlated with social media addiction*
- H₀₃:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of friendship maintenance is not correlated with social media addiction*
- H₀₄:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of information seeking is not correlated with social media addiction*
- H₀₅:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of identity creation & management is not correlated with social media addiction*
- H₀₆:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of free expression is not correlated with social media addiction*
- H₀₇:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of escape is not correlated with social media addiction*

Secondly, owing to this research investigated with regard to the influence of generation among social media addiction and gratifications-obtained, consequently researcher proposed null hypothesized that:

- H₀₈:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of peer attention is not influenced by generation of user*
- H₀₉:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of social exchange is not influenced by generation of user*

- H_{o10}:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of friendship maintenance is not influenced by generation of user*
- H_{o11}:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of information seeking is not influenced by generation of user*
- H_{o12}:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of identity creation & management is not influenced by generation of user*
- H_{o13}:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of free expression is not influenced by generation of user*
- H_{o14}:** *The gratification of social media usage in term of escape is not influenced by generation of user*
- H_{o15}:** *Generation of user will not have any significant influence toward social media addiction*

Research methodology: The respondents of this research were 3 generations who still display their social media usage habits in Bangkok, Thailand. Exhaustively those 3 generations are (1) Baby-Boomers, (2) Gen X, and (3) Gen Y. The data of this research was collected from 210 online and offline questionnaires, which contain both gratifications concept and social media addiction concept accordingly. In detail, each generation group contained 70 samples for clearly assessing the influence of generation.

Pilot study: Although this research represents an overall of social media addiction, as a

dependent variable, but each of reliability of those 4 symptoms, which carry along with social media addiction concept, was still relevant to observe owing to basically, in this study should represent a social media addiction in 4 symptoms perspectives, which are Preoccupation, Adverse consequences, Alleviation of negative emotions, and Loss of interest in social activities. On the other hand, the scale of 7 independent variables in this study was tested by Cronbach's alpha similarly.

Table 1: Results from reliability pilot test of social media addiction by 36 correspondents

Scale	No. Of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Social Media Addiction	12	0.939
Preoccupation	4	0.863
Adverse Consequences	3	0.882
Alleviation of Negative Emotions	3	0.795
Loss of interest in social activities	2	0.561

Table 2: Results from reliability pilot test of 7 gratifications-obtained by 36 correspondents

Scale	No. Of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Peer Attention	3	0.829
Social Exchange	3	0.896
Friendship Maintenance	3	0.648

Scale	No. Of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Information Seeking	3	0.767
Identity C&M	3	0.811
Free Expression	3	0.890
Escape	3	0.819

After done a pilot reliability test, researcher found that Loss of Interest in Social Activities symptom that be carried in Social Media Addiction were not relevant for studying in Bangkok, Thailand due to the fact that it has Cronbach's Alpha equal to 0,561, which is lower than this research criteria. Therefore researcher cut Loss of Interest in Social Activities perspectives out from Social Media Addiction symptoms. Consequently, this research was contained only 3 perspectives of social media addiction symptoms, which are (1) Preoccupation symptom, (2) Adverse Consequences symptom, and (3) Alleviation of Negative Emotions symptom.

Questionnaire of this research were divided into 2 sections. Firstly, the respondents were asked for age that can refer back to 3 generations existing in Bangkok, which are (1) Baby boomers, (2) Gen X, and (3) Gen Y, then they will be asked for response to level of social media use questions, which categorized by different kind of social media, such as IM, SNS, Blogs and Micro blogs, in this part the question that be asked for frequency will use 7 point scale, such as (1) Do not use, (2) Less than 15 minutes, (3) 15-29 minutes, (4) 30-59 minutes, (5) 60-119 minutes, (6) 120 to 170 minutes, and (7) more than 180 minutes, in contrast to the question that be asked for friends in social media application will use 7 point scale that show numbers of friend that respondent has in each application, those 7 point scale include (1) 0-10 persons, (2) 11-30 persons, (3) 31-50 persons, (4) 51-100 persons, (5) 101-150 persons, (6) 151-200 persons, and (7) more than 200 persons. Secondly, correspondents will be asked to fulfil the questions that be shown in table 4.3 by using 5-point Likert scale, which are 1 = Strongly Disagree or Never, 2 = Disagree or Seldom, 3 = Fair or Sometimes, 4 = Agree or Often, and 5 = Strongly Agree or Always.

Results and discussion: From the frequencies analysis within Baby-boomers generation, the main results showed that 26% of 70 correspondents are commonly spending 30-59 minutes per day for using Instant messaging applications, while 30% of 70 are roughly having

51-100 friends in those applications. In contrast to Social Network Sites (SNS), 24% of them are commonly spending 15-29 minutes each day for checking those sites; moreover 23% of samples are having 51-100 friends in SNS. Furthermore, 44% and 67% of Baby-Boomers generation are not using Blog and Micro-Blog respectively. Whereas, the main results of Generation X showed that 37% of 70 correspondents are commonly spending 30-59 minutes per day for using Instant messaging applications, while 23% of 70 are roughly having 31-50 friends and more than 200 friends equally in those applications. In contrast to Social Network Sites (SNS), 29% of them are commonly spending 30-59 minutes each day for checking those sites; moreover 21% of samples are having more than 200 friends in SNS. Furthermore, 29% and 60% of Generation X are not using Blog and Micro-Blog respectively. Lastly, the main results of Generation Y showed that 27% of 70 correspondents are commonly spending 30-59 minutes per day for using Instant messaging applications, while 31% of 70 are roughly having more than 200 friends in those applications. In contrast to Social Network Sites (SNS), 26% of them are commonly spending 30-59 minutes each day for checking those sites; moreover 46% of samples are having more than 200 friends in SNS. Although 29% of them are using Blog with less than 15 minutes average time, but 57% of Generation Y is not using Micro-Blog correspondingly.

One of the objectives of this research is exploration of the correlation between 7 gratifications-obtained when using social media and social media addiction, consequently Pearson's correlation was used in first section of this research to evaluate that particular objective. In the other hand, the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted in second section to assess an influence of different generations toward (1) 7 gratifications that can be obtained from using social media, and (2) overall social media addiction. By practicing on those methodologies of this research, researcher found some main points as by subsequent:

Table 3: Summary of Hypothesis testing of Pearson's correlation

Hypothesis	Significance (2-tailed test)	Pearson's Correlation	Results
H ₀₁	0.002	0.210	Rejected
H ₀₂	0.004	0.200	Rejected
H ₀₃	0.000	0.267	Rejected
H ₀₄	0.508	None	Failed to rejected
H ₀₅	0.000	0.304	Rejected
H ₀₆	0.000	0.363	Rejected
H ₀₇	0.000	0.473	Rejected

The results of table 5.1 showed the hypothesis testing result that H₀₁ was rejected due to p-value (sig. 2-tailed) is equal to 0.002, which can be concluded that there is a correlation between Peer attention and social media addiction. Exhaustively, Pearson's correlation of H₀₁ displayed positive 0.210, which means there is a weak relationship between both parameters and the variation of both values will be on the same direction.

H₀₂ was rejected due to p-value (sig. 2-tailed) is equal to 0.004, which can be concluded that there is a correlation between Social exchange and social media addiction. Exhaustively, Pearson's correlation of H₀₂ displayed positive 0.200, which means there is a weak relationship between both parameters and the variation of both values will be on the same direction.

H₀₃ was rejected due to p-value (sig. 2-tailed) is equal to 0.000, which can be concluded that there is a correlation between Friendship maintenance and social media addiction. Exhaustively, Pearson's correlation of H₀₃ displayed positive 0.267, which means there is a weak relationship between both parameters and the variation of both values will be on the same direction.

The significance value of H₀₄ is equal to 0.508, which is greater than $P < 0.05$ level, thus it can be

concluded that there is no correlation between Information seeking and social media addiction. H₀₅ was rejected due to p-value (sig. 2-tailed) is equal to 0.000, which can be concluded that there is a correlation between Identity creation & management and social media addiction. Exhaustively, Pearson's correlation of H₀₅ displayed positive 0.304, which means there is a weak relationship between both parameters and the variation of both values will be on the same direction.

The significance value of H₀₆ is equal to 0.000, which is less than $P < 0.05$ level, thus it can be concluded that there is a relationship between Free expression and social media addiction. In detail Pearson's correlation of H₀₆ displayed positive 0.363, which means there is a weak relationship between both parameters and the variation of both values will be on the same direction.

The significance value of H₀₇ is equal to 0.000, which is less than $P < 0.05$ level, thus it can be concluded that there is a relationship between Escape and social media addiction. In detail Pearson's correlation of H₀₇ displayed positive 0.473, which means there is a weak relationship between both parameters and the variation of both values will be on the same direction.

Table 4: Summary of Hypothesis testing of ANOVA

Hypothesis	ANOVA Significance (2-tailed test)	Results	Post-hoc Results (Scheffé)
H ₀₈	0.212	Failed to rejected	None
H ₀₉	0.309	Failed to rejected	None
H ₀₁₀	0.018	Rejected	Gen Y- Baby boomers
H ₀₁₁	0.013	Rejected	Gen Y- Baby boomers
H ₀₁₂	0.005	Rejected	Gen Y- others group
H ₀₁₃	0.000	Rejected	Gen Y- others group
H ₀₁₄	0.000	Rejected	Gen Y- others group
H ₀₁₅	0.000	Rejected	Gen Y- others group

The result of ANOVA displayed that there is no difference in mean between 3 groups of generation due to $F_{(2,209)} = 1.564$, $p = .212$. Therefore, failed to reject H₀₈, which means that the gratification of social media usage in term of peer attention is not influenced by generation of user.

The significance value of H₀₉ is equal to 0.309, which is greater than $P < 0.05$ level, thus it can be concluded the gratification of social media usage in term of social exchange is not influenced by generation of user.

The result displayed that H₀₁₀ is rejected due to $F_{(2,209)} = 4.108$, $p = 0.018$, thus there is the influence of generation toward friendship maintenance at $p < .05$ level. In addition, follow-up test of Scheffé indicated that the mean score of Baby-boomers ($M = 3.1143$, $SD = 0.8473$) was significantly different from Generation Y ($M = 3.4571$, $SD = 0.6790$), while, Generation X ($M = 3.2190$, $SD = 0.6317$) did not significantly differ from Generation Y and Baby-boomers.

The result displayed that H₀₁₁ is rejected due to $F_{(2,209)} = 4.447$, $p = 0.013$, thus there is the influence of generation toward information seeking at $p < .05$ level. In addition, follow-up

test of Scheffé indicated that the mean score of Baby-boomers ($M = 3.7000$, $SD = 0.6694$) was significantly different from Generation Y ($M = 3.9857$, $SD = 0.5515$), while, Generation X ($M = 3.7524$, $SD = 0.5834$) did not significantly differ from Generation Y and Baby-boomers.

The result displayed that H₀₁₂ is rejected due to $F_{(2,209)} = 5.458$, $p = 0.005$, thus there is the influence of generation toward identity creation & management at $p < .05$ level. In addition, follow-up test of Scheffé indicated that the mean score of Generation Y ($M = 2.8667$, $SD = 0.8890$) was significantly different from Baby-boomers ($M = 2.4429$, $SD = 0.8713$) and Generation X ($M = 2.4810$, $SD = 0.7521$), while, Generation X did not significantly differ from Baby-boomers.

The result revealed that H₀₁₃ is rejected due to $F_{(2,209)} = 15.942$, $p = 0.000$, thus there is the influence of generation toward free expression at $p < .05$ level. In totalling, follow-up test of Scheffé indicated that the mean score of Generation Y ($M = 3.3286$, $SD = 0.8234$) was significantly different from Baby-boomers ($M = 2.7048$, $SD = 0.9195$) and Generation X ($M = 2.5810$, $SD = 0.7691$), while, Generation X did not significantly differ from Baby-boomers.

The result shown that H_{014} is rejected due to $F_{(2,209)} = 8.333$, $p = 0.000$, thus there is the influence of generation toward escape at $p < .05$ level. In detail, follow-up test of Scheffé indicated that the mean score of Generation Y ($M = 2.9571$, $SD = 0.9079$) was significantly different from Baby-boomers ($M = 2.4857$, $SD = 0.8563$) and Generation X ($M = 2.4381$, $SD = 0.7191$), while, Generation X did not significantly differ from Baby-boomers.

Lastly from table, H_{015} is rejected due to $F_{(2,209)} = 8.043$, $p = 0.000$, thus there is the influence of generation toward social media addiction at $p < .05$ level. In addition, follow-up test of Scheffé indicated that the mean score of Generation Y ($M = 2.5914$, $SD = 0.8599$) was significantly different from Baby-boomers ($M = 2.0843$, $SD = 0.8652$) and Generation X ($M = 2.1229$, $SD = 0.7701$), while, Generation X did not significantly differ from Baby-boomers.

Conclusion: This research was conducted to assess 3 research objectives, which are

1. To identify and study the relationship between social media gratifications-Obtained and social media addiction
2. To identify and study the influence of generations on social media addiction
3. To identify and study the influence of generations on social media gratification-Obtained

For the first research objective, researcher found that entirely of 7 independent variables excluding Information seeking were positively related to social media addiction. In addition, although the strength of their relationship was weak and moderate, but it was conforming to the correlation results from original study of Huang (2011) that had been studied before.

Besides on the behalf on second research objective, results from this research

confirmed that Generation Y was appealed into social media world and be stuck with social media addiction dilemma due to the fact that they were significantly difference from others cohort as Dye (2007) and Rawlins et al. (2008) mentioned before.

Lastly in case of influence of generations toward 7 gratifications-obtained, the product of this research confirmed the statement of Lenhart and Madden (2007) and Park et al. (2009) that Generation Y and some other group did not differently gain the gratification from using social media in term of seeking information and maintaining some friendship, while Generation Y was difference from others cohort in term of identity creation & management, free expression, and escape gratifications. Statistically, there was no influence of generation toward peer attention and social exchange at $P < .05$ levels.

Recommendation for further study:

One of the most important things in this research that should be considered is the weak relationship between social media addiction and those gratifications-obtained. Exhaustively, owing to this study was adapted and adopted some new concepts from Huang (2011), which was a research that established the social media addiction concept and pioneered the correlation between 7 gratifications-obtained besides social media addiction, thus researcher believed that some research instruments that had been used are in early stage of implementation and be reason behind those weak relationship complexities. Consequently, researcher proposed that in order to improve a social media addiction study into a next level, those scales should be developed to generate a more definiteness result at the end.

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